



Seattle Police Department

Policies and Procedures

Section

1.010

Title:

I - Administration

Chapter:

010 – Unbiased Policing

REFERENCES

Department Policies and Procedures 1.000, 1.029, 2.010 and 2.081

CALEA standard 1.2.9

PURPOSE

This policy is intended to reaffirm the commitment of the Seattle Police Department to unbiased policing, to clarify the circumstances in which officers can consider race or ethnicity when making law enforcement decisions, and to reinforce procedures that serve to assure the public that we are providing service and enforcing laws in an equitable way. In order to be effective we must be trusted and deal with both the reality of the difficult and complex job of policing and the perception of police work.

POLICY

Investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrests, searches, and property seizures by officers will be based on a standard of reasonable suspicion or probable cause. Officers must be able to articulate specific facts and circumstances that support reasonable suspicion or probable cause for investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrests, nonconsensual searches, and property seizures.

Except as provided below, race or ethnicity shall not be motivating factors in making law enforcement decisions and officers shall not:

- Consider race or ethnicity in establishing either reasonable suspicion or probable cause.
- Consider race or ethnicity in deciding to initiate even those nonconsensual encounters that do not amount to legal detentions or to request consent to search.

Officers may take into account the reported race or ethnicity of a specific suspect or suspects based on trustworthy, locally relevant information that links a person or persons of a specific race or ethnicity to a particular unlawful incident. Race or ethnicity can never be used as the sole basis for probable cause or reasonable suspicion.

Supervisors shall ensure that all personnel in their command are familiar with the content of this policy and are operating in compliance with it.

ADMINISTRATION

At least annually, the Director of the Office of Professional Accountability shall prepare a report for the Chief of Police describing and analyzing the status of the Department's effort to prevent biased policing.

- Sustained complaints of biased policing shall result in corrective actions.
- The Department's ongoing training curriculum shall include regular biased policing updates.